International Teaching Assistants: Institutional Support at Top Research Universities

NAFSA Bi-Regional Conference
San Juan, Puerto Rico
October 17, 2012
Presenters

- Jim Hamrick, PhD, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, English Language Institute
- Laurie Knox, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, English Department
- Ferlin McGaskey, PhD, University of Texas at Austin, Center for Teaching and Learning
- Joann Ng Hartmann, University of Tennessee, Center for International Education
Today’s presentation

- The purpose of this project
- Scope of project
- Process and summary
- Activity
- Question and Answer
Purpose: UTK Context

- Number of ITAs?
- 75-160 students/semester take SPEAK
- Historical support
  - ELI courses
  - Hearing/Speech Center consultations
1. How are ITAs assessed (screened)?
   – At admission?
   – At matriculation?
   – Prior to teaching?

2. What assessment measures are used?

3. What support mechanisms are available?

4. What needs do those support mechanisms address?

5. What other resources are available to ITAs?
Scope of project

- Identifying institutions
- Program sponsors
- Entrance requirements and other testing requirements
- Courses/training offered
- Cultural/social support opportunities
Process and Results

- Our ongoing collaborative process
- Preliminary findings
  - Significant similarities
  - Striking contrasts
  - Best practices
Striking variation in organizational structures
Lack of standardization in oral proficiency testing
UT trailing peers in ITA training and support—an opportunity!
Best Practices?
On UTK’s campus

- Development of “ITA Seminar I”
- Summer intensive course
- Objectives
- Outcomes
- Small-group Emphasis
Self assessment/inventory
Bridging the “gap”